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THE TOMB OF *SHAKESPEAR.* A VISION.

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THE TOMB OF *SHAKESPEAR.* A VISION.

WHAT time the jocund roſie-boſom'd HOURS
Led forth the train of PHOEBUS and the SPRING,
And ZEPHYR mild profuſely ſcatter'd flowers
On Earth's green mantle from his muſky wing,

The MORN unbarr'd th' ambroſial gates of light,
Weſtward the raven-pinion'd Darkneſs flew,
The Landſcape ſmil'd in vernal beauty bright,
And to their graves the ſullen Ghoſts withdrew:

The nightingale no longer ſwell'd her throat
With love-lorn plainings tremulous and ſlow,
And on the wings of Silence ceas'd to float
The ſoothing ſtrains of her melodious woe:

Then

The God of ſleep myſterious viſions led
In gay proceſſion 'fore the mental eye,
And my free'd ſoul awhile her manſion fled,
To try her plumes for immortality.

Thro' fields of air, methought, I took my flight,
Thro' ev'ry clime o'er ev'ry region paſs'd,
No paradiſe or ruin 'ſcap'd my ſight,
HESPERIAN garden, or CIMMERIAN waſte.

On AVON's banks I lit, whoſe ſtreams appear
To wind with eddies fond round SHARESPEAR's tomb,
The year's firſt feath'ry ſongſters warble near,
And vi'lets breathe, and earlieſt roſes bloom.

Here FANCY ſat, (her dewy fingers cold
Decking with flow'rets freſh th' unſullied ſod,)
And bath'd with tears the ſad ſepulchral mold,
Her fav'rite offspring's long and laſt abode.

Ah! what avails, ſhe cry'd, a Poet's name?
Ah! what avails th' immortalizing breath
To ſnatch from dumb Oblivion others' fame?
My darling child here lies a prey to Death!

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Let

Let gentle OTWAY, white-rob'd PITY's prieſt,
From grief domeſtic teach the tears to flow,
Or SOUTHERN captivate th' impaſſion'd breaſt
With heart-felt ſighs and ſympathy of woe:

For not to theſe *his* genius was confin'd,
Nature and I each tuneful pow'r had given,
Poetic tranſports of the madding mind,
And the wing'd words that waft the ſoul to heaven;

The fiery glance of th' intellectual eye,
Piercing all objects of creation's ſtore,
Which on this world's extended ſurface lie;
And plaſtic thought that ſtill created more.

O grant, with eager rapture I reply'd,
Grant me, great goddeſs of the changeful eye,
To view each Being in poetic pride,
To whom thy ſon gave immortality.

Sweet FANCY ſmil'd, and wav'd her myſtic rod,
When ſtrait theſe viſions felt her pow'rful arm,
And one by one ſucceeded at her nod,
As vaſſal ſprites obey the wizard's charm.

Firſt a celeſtial form (1) (of azure hue
Whoſe mantle, bound with brede ætherial, flow'd
To each ſoft breeze it's balmy breath that drew)
Swift down the ſun-beams of the noon-tide rode.

Obedient to the necromantic ſway
Of an old ſage to ſolitude reſign'd,
With fenny vapors he obſcur'd the day,
Launch'd the long lightning, and let looſe the wind.

He whirl'd the tempeſt thro' the howling air,
Rattled the dreadful thunderclap on high,
And rais'd a roaring elemental war
Betwixt the ſea-green waves and azure ſky.

Then, like heav'n's mild embaſſador of love
To man repentant, bade the tumult ceaſe,
Smooth'd the blue boſom of the realms above,
And huſh'd the rebel elements to peace.

Unlike to this in ſpirit or in mien
Another form (2) ſucceeded to my view;
A two-legg'd brute which Nature made in ſpleen,
Or from the loathing womb unfiniſh'd drew.

Scarce

(1) Ariel in the Tempeſt.
(2) Caliban in the Tempeſt.

Scarce could he ſyllable the curſe he thought,
Prone were his eyes to earth, his mind to evil,
A carnal fiend to imperfection wrought,
The mongrel offspring of a Witch and Devil.

Next bloom'd, upon an ancient foreſt's bound,
The flow'ry margin (3) of a ſilent ſtream,
O'er-arch'd by oaks with ivy mantled round,
And gilt by ſilver CYNTHIA's maiden beam.

On the green carpet of th' unbended graſs,
A dapper train of female fairies play'd,
And ey'd their gambols in the watry glaſs,
That ſmoothly ſtole along the ſhad'wy glade.

Thro' theſe the queen TITANIA paſs'd ador'd,
Mounted aloft in her imperial car,
Journeying to ſee great OBERON her lord,
Wage the mock battles of a ſportive war.

Arm'd cap-a-pee forth march'd the fairy king,
A ſtouter warrior never took the field,
His threat'ning lance a hornet's horrid ſting,
The ſharded beetle's ſcale his ſable ſhield.

Around

(3) Fairy-land from the Midſummer night's dream.

Around their chief the elfin hoſt appear'd,
Each little helmet ſparkled like a ſtar,
And their ſharp ſpears in pierceleſs phalanx rear'd,
A grove of thiſtles, glitter'd in the air.

The ſcene then chang'd, from this romantic land,
To a bleak waſte by bound'ry unconfin'd,
Where three ſwart ſiſters (4) of the *weyward* band
Were mutt'ring curſes to the troublous wind.

Pale Want had wither'd every furrow'd face,
Bow'd was each carcaſs with the weight of years,
And each ſunk eye-ball from its hollow caſe
Diſtill'd cold rheum's involuntary tears.

Hors'd on three ſtaves they poſted to the bourn
Of a drear iſland, where the pendant brow
Of a rough rock, ſhagg'd horribly with thorn,
Frown'd on the boiſt'rous waves which rag'd below.

Deep in a gloomy grot remote from day,
Where ſmiling Comfort never ſhew'd her face,
Where light ne'er enter'd, ſave one rueful ray
Diſcov'ring all the terrors of the place,

They

(4) The witches in Macbeth.

They held damn'd myſt'ries with infernal ſtate,
Whilſt ghaſtly ſpectres glided ſlowly by,
The ſcritch-owl ſcream'd the dying call of fate,
And ravens croak'd their baleful augury.

No human footſtep chear'd the dread abode,
Nor ſign of living creature could be ſeen,
Save where the reptile ſnake, or ſullen toad,
The murky floor had ſoil'd with venom green.

Sudden I heard the whirlwind's hollow ſound,
Each *weyward* ſiſter vaniſh'd into ſmoke.
Now a dire yell of ſpirits (5) underground
Thro' troubled Earth's wide yawning ſurface broke;

When lo! each injur'd apparition roſe;
Aghaſt the murd'rer ſtarted from his bed;
Guilt's trembling breath his heart's red current froze,
And Horror's dew-drops bath'd his frantic head.

More had I ſeen— but now the God of day
O'er earth's broad breaſt his flood of light had ſpread,
When Morpheus call'd his fickle dreams away,
And on *their* wings each bright illuſion fled.

(5) Ghoſts in Macbeth, Richard the III, &c.

Yet ſtill the dear ENCHANTRESS of the brain
My waking eyes with wiſhful wand'rings ſought,
Whoſe magic will controuls th' ideal train,
The ever reſtleſs progeny of THOUGHT.

Sweet pow'r, I ſaid, for others gild the ray
Of Wealth, or Honor's folly-feather'd crown,
Or lead the madding multitude aſtray
To graſp at air-blown bubbles of renown.

Me (humbler lot!) let blameleſs bliſs engage,
Free from the noble mob's ambitious ſtrife,
Free from the muck-worm miſer's lucrous rage,
In calm Contentment's cottag'd vale of life.

If frailties there (for who from them is free?)
Thro' Error's maze my devious footſteps lead,
Let them be frailties of humanity,
And my heart plead the pardon of my head.

Let not my reaſon impiouſly require
What heav'n has plac'd beyond it's narrow ſpan,
But teach it to ſubdue each fierce deſire,
Which wars within it's own ſmall empire, man.

Teach

Teach me, what all believe, but few poſſeſs,
That life's beſt ſcience is ourſelves to know,
The firſt of human bleſſings is to bleſs,
And happieſt he who feels another's woe.

Thus cheaply wiſe, and innocently great,
While Time's ſmooth ſand ſhall regularly paſs,
Each deſtin'd atom's quiet courſe I'll wait,
Nor raſhly break, nor wiſh to ſtop the glaſs.

And when in death my peaceful aſhes lie,
If e'er ſome tongue congenial ſpeaks my name,
Friendſhip ſhall never bluſh to breathe a ſigh,
And great ones envy ſuch an honeſt fame.

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